ERIC Document Resume	See Instruction Sheet	DATE OF RESUME 7/28/65	DATE RECEIVED 7/26/65

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ED001444	2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S). N.A.	3. IDENTIFICATION NO. N.A.

4. AUTHOR(S): Rasschaert, William M. and Lankton, Robert S,

5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED: Survey of Policies on Homework

6. PUBLICATION TITLE: N.A.

7. EDITOR(S): N.A.

8. PLACE OF ORIGIN: Detroit Public Schools (ORG.); Detroit, Michigan (ST. CITY, STATE)

9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE: Department of Instructional Research, Detroit Public Schools, Detroit, Michigan

TELE. EXT. INST/LOC CODE

10. VOL.	11. PAGES	12. MO./YR.	13. TOTAL PP.
N.A.	N.A.	4/61	7

DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW

MICROFILM COPY AVAILABLE: YES ☒ NO ☐

COPYRIGHT GRANTED: YES ☐ NO ☒

COPYRIGHT RELEASE FILED: YES ☐ NO ☐

TYPE OF REPORT: PROPOSAL ☐ IN-PROGRESS ☐ FINAL ☒ FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR: survey report

16. INDEXING TERMS (6-12)

homework assignments	secondary school	elementary school	
homework policies	policy formation	study regulations	
policy evaluation	policy flexibility	Detroit Metropolitan Area	
	instructional research	Detroit Public Schools, Detroit Michigan	

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Responses to a questionnaire on homework policy were received from 47 of 48 school systems to which the survey was sent. The school systems included 23 in cities of major size throughout the nation and 25 in cities of the Detroit Metropolitan area.

In response to the question of having a policy on homework, most of the large school systems stated that they did have such a policy and that it was formally written. Most of the Detroit school systems replied that they did not have a homework policy, implying an informally understood, rather than a written, homework policy. Only a slight variation among school systems on the national and local levels appeared in answers to a question regarding the actual clock hours per week recommended by the homework policy. Average hours to be spent on homeworkwere 3 for elementary pupils, 6½ for junior high pupils, and 10 for senior high students.

The surveyed school district agreed that homework assignments should be flexible, varying for individuals according to their needs. Flexibility in practice was recognized among subject areas, curriculum areas, different neighborhoods, and different school districts.

Regardless of the kind of homework policy a school system has, a periodical review and evaluation of the policy should be made. The evaluation and formation procedures were recognized as most valuable when they constituted cooperative efforts involving various professional personnel of the school system.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION	20. DIVISION OR DEPT.	21. CONTRACT NO. / PROJECT NO.
	22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT	
	23. DURATION OR PROJECT	U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education

ERIC Form 1

000 382

HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
CENTER FOR RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

ED001444

SURVEY OF POLICIES ON HOMEWORK

William M. Rasschaert and Robert S. Lankton
Department of Instructional Research
Detroit Public Schools
April, 1961

Responses to a questionnaire titled "Survey of Policies on Homework" were received from 47 out of 48 school systems to which the questionnaire was sent in the spring of 1960. The school systems surveyed were in cities of different sizes classified in two groups as follows:

Groups of Cities	Number of Cities Contacted	Number of Cities Responding
Cities of Major Size	23	23
Cities in the Detroit Metropolitan Area	25	24
Total	48	47

Not all the respondents answered all the questions on the questionnaire, but many included printed material relative to their own school policies on homework.

Table I gives the names of the school systems included in the survey, the total number of pupils in each, the names of the responding school officers, and the titles of printed materials which contain references to homework where such were submitted.

Table II shows in tabular form the way the various city school systems responded to the questions of the survey.

Following the tables is a statement which draws implications from the survey for possible application in the Detroit school system. Implications are drawn from direct responses to the questionnaire, from comments contributed by the respondents, and from printed materials submitted.

REPRINTED BY PERMISSION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN PRINTED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

TABLE I

SCHOOL SYSTEMS INCLUDED IN THE SURVEY OF POLICIES ON HOMEWORK

Location of School System	Number of Pupils	Name of School Officer Responding	Publication Relative to Homework
Cities of Major Size:			
Atlanta, Ga.	112,000	H. M. Ruie	"A Pattern for Better High Schools"
Baltimore, Md.	167,000	Thomas VanSaut	"Meaningful Homework"
Boston, Mass.	89,000	William H. Ohrenberger	
Buffalo, N.Y.	68,000	B. B. Ziegdbody	
Chicago, Ill.	471,000	Lester J. Schloerb	
Cleveland, Ohio	132,000	Mark C. Schinnerer	
Dade County, Fla.	165,000	Jeff West	"Recommendations"
Denver, Colo.	87,000	Lloyd B. Jones	
Houston, Texas	168,000	Henry A. Jahnke	
Indianapolis, Ind.	81,000	Russell A. Lane	"Your Child and Homework"
Los Angeles, Calif.	632,000	James T. Lynch	"Home Study Regulations"
Milwaukee, Wisconsin	97,000	Dwight Teel	"Present Policy on Homework"
Minneapolis, Minn.	72,000	Adner I. Heggerston	
New Orleans, La.	91,000	Stanley Fitzpatrick	"Definition of Homework"
New York, N.Y.	960,000	Jacob Greenberg	"Supplementary Information on Homework"
Philadelphia, Pa.	250,000	John B. Taulane	"Assignment of Homework"
Pittsburgh, Pa.	78,000	Merwin L. Himmler	
Portland, Oregon	75,000	J. W. Edwards	
St. Louis, Mo.	99,000	Ken Oliver, Jr.	
San Diego, Calif.	123,000	William H. Stegman	"Homework in the Elementary Grades" and "Homework in the Junior and Senior High Schools"
San Francisco, Calif.	97,000	J. B. Hill	"The Junior High Schools of San Francisco"
Seattle, Washington	90,000	Harold B. Jeffery	"Homework"
Washington, D.C.	118,000	Boise L. Bristor	
Cities in Detroit Area			
Allen Park	6,000	John E. Wysoski	
Dearborn	22,000	H. Bennett	
East Detroit	10,000	Charles Goetz	"Homework Policy"
Ecorse	4,000	Hans E. Lantzsch	
Farmington	7,600	G. V. Harrison	
Ferndale	8,077	Roy E. Robinson	
Grosse Pointe	10,300	H. Leroy Selmeier	

Table I (Continued)

Location of School System	Number of Pupils	Name of School Officer Responding	Publication Relative to Homework
Hamtramck	4,100	E. M. Conklin	
Harper Woods	2,240	George R. Truckey	
Hazel Park	7,700	Wilfred Webb	
Highland Park	7,000	Byron F. Evans	
Lakeshore	823	Robert Burgoyne	
Lakeview	6,200	James H. Rossman	
Livonia	15,000	Paul Johnson	
Melvindale	4,481	Richard D. Evans	
Oak Park	5,850	Clifford B. May	
Plymouth	4,775	Russell L. Isbister	
Redford Union	8,600	Russel S. Hilbert	
River Rouge	3,558	Robert H. Korn	
Roseville	11,400	Carl Brablec	"Point of View on Homework"
Royal Oak	17,735	Maud Price	
South Lake	4,400	John Lewis	
Van Dyke	5,500	Max Thompson	
Wayne Community	12,000	J. Luster Godby	

TABLE II

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS IN THE SURVEY OF POLICIES ON HOMEWORK

Question and Kind of Response	Cities of Major Size	Cities in Detroit Area	Both
1. Does your school system have a policy on homework?			
Yes	17	8	25
No	1	15	16
2. How is your policy on homework expressed?			
Formally stated	13	1	14
Informally understood	3	18	21
3. Approximately how many clock hours per week does your policy on homework recommend?			
Average for elementary pupils	2½	3	3
Average for junior high pupils	7	6	6½
Average for senior high pupils	10½	9	10
4. Does your policy recommend different homework "loads" for pupils of low, average or high ability?			
Yes	7	11	18
No	8	2	10

Question and Kind of Response		Cities of Major Size	Cities in Detroit Area	Both
5. Are most pupils able to take textbooks home from school at				
a. elementary level?	Yes	19	17	36
	No	1	3	4
b. junior high level?	Yes	18	20	38
	No	0	0	0
c. senior high level?	Yes	20	20	40
	No	0	0	0
6. Does your policy on homework allow flexibility in practice among:				
a. subject areas, e.g.,reading, arithmetic, social studies?	Yes	16	16	32
	No	0	0	0
b. curriculum areas in junior and senior highs, e.g.,commercial,college preparatory, and vocational?	Yes	16	16	32
	No	0	0	0
c. schools in the same district or neighborhood?	Yes	15	14	29
	No	1	0	1
d. schools in different socio-economic neighborhoods or districts?	Yes	15	13	28
	No	1	1	2
7. Is your homework policy periodically reviewed?	Yes	15	9	24
	No	3	8	11
8. Is your policy on homework cooperatively determined?	Yes	18	12	30
	No	0	2	2

IMPLICATIONS FOR A HOMEWORK POLICY DRAWN FROM SURVEY RESPONSES

Question 1. Does your school system have a policy on homework?

If Detroit is interested in following the pattern of other large cities, it would seem that we would have to formulate a written statement of policy on homework, its philosophy,the criteria for assigning homework,its function, and its implementation. Most of the large school systems do have a stated policy on homework even though that policy may be quite dated. Indications are that some kind of a stated policy (which would have built into it flexibility and consideration of all the anticipated variables in application of homework policy) would be desirable for Detroit.

As far as the Detroit metropolitan area schools are concerned, most of them say that they have no policy on homework, and by this they mean they have no written homework policy. Actually, the school systems in the Detroit metropolitan area have an informally understood policy in almost all cases. "Local school autonomy and implementation of local school policy" in these school systems is the key factor evident throughout all the responses. This implies that Detroit, although having an over-all policy, would encourage both a district statement and local school implementation with freedom for principals and teachers as far as broad interpretation is concerned.

Question 2. How is your policy on homework expressed? Formally stated? Informally understood?

There is almost an opposite kind of response from the large city school systems and the Detroit metropolitan area school systems. Most of the large systems state they have a formally stated policy while most of the Detroit metropolitan area school systems say that they have an informally understood policy. One of the questions that comes to mind is, "Does Detroit align itself with the Detroit metropolitan area and not write a policy?" On the other hand, "Does Detroit follow the pattern of other large major cities and formally state its policy but allow for broad interpretation among the schools?" The latter seems the most common sense approach to this problem and it would violate neither the local automony of schools, teachers, and principals in Detroit nor would it be evasive in the sense that a large city school system would be unable to point to some guidelines of homework policy.

Question 3. Approximately how many clock hours per week does your policy on homework recommend for (a) elementary pupils; (b) junior high pupils; and (c) senior high students?

It seems there is only slight variation among school systems both on a national and a local level in answer to this question. In most school systems homework is not recommended in grades 1 through 3. In grades 4 through 6 there is some home study recommended in about half of the school systems, but purely in the nature of studying spelling lists, doing drill on arithmetic, finishing a geography map, and various kinds of limited work for strengthening. The total amount of time recommended for this homework in grades 4 to 6 is approximately 45 minutes per day.

Almost all school systems recommended that homework during grades 7 through 9 (either later elementary or junior high school) be "gradually increased." The number of hours per week would reach a maximum in grade 9 of about ten hours a week. Also, in both local and national school systems it seems that the high school grades would demand an average of 40-45 minutes per subject per day so that the high school student in a college preparatory curriculum might be spending an average of 12 hours a week in home study. This is figuring on a basis of a student carrying <u>four</u> academic subjects but getting homework in an average of only three each night. Actually the average number of hours spent in home study by a college preparatory student might run closer to 15 hours per week, nationally.

It would seem when stating a policy on homework, Detroit might follow these guidelines but build into the statement flexibility among districts and among curricula at the high school level.

Question 4. Does your policy recommend different homework "loads" for pupils of low, average, or high ability?

It is agreed that homework assignments should be flexible and vary for individuals according to their needs, but the time spent on homework does not necessarily vary by ability levels.

Question 5. Are most pupils able to take textbooks home from school?

There is not very much variation either on a local or national level in answer to this question. Nearly all school systems at all grade levels allow children to take books home from school. In many cases the caution is made that, "These books are to be used with discretion and that they are not to be read or used in such a way as to make the actual classroom work boring to the child." In other words, they should not be overused at home. It would seem the Detroit policy on taking books home (whether free books supplied by the Board of Education or rental books as in some secondary schools) some statement should be made explaining the freedom Detroit children have to take textbooks home from school.

Question 6. Does your policy on homework allow for flexibility in practice among subject areas, curriculum areas, schools in the same district or neighborhood, and schools in different neighborhoods or districts?

Nearly all the school systems responding to this question provide for this kind of flexibility. It may be difficult to articulate and explain a policy on flexibility of homework but some such statement would be helpful.

Question 7. Is your homework policy periodically reviewed?

Over 60 per cent of the school systems indicated that their homework policy (whether it be a "functioning policy" or a formally stated one) is periodically reviewed. Detroit after formulating a policy, should set up some means of periodic review even though it might be a relatively broad review done by a group representing the various districts. The transiency and rapid change in an urban area indicates that this should be a recommended procedure.

Question 8. Is your policy on homework cooperatively determined?

Indications from nearly all school systems are that regardless of the kind of policy in existence, it is cooperatively determined by the various professional personnel of the school system working as a group or committee. In some cases, after initial work has been done, parents of children at all school levels are involved in policy formulation or, at least, in explanation of policy. In some

cases, after initial work has been done, parents of children at all school levels are involved in policy formulation or, at least, in explanation of policy. In some cases, involving students directly or indirectly in the formulation of some aspects of homework policy is undertaken at the senior high school level.

An organization such as a curriculum council, after hearing representatives from the district levels, could determine a policy statement for Detroit that is meaningful to the public and to parents and, also, of value to classroom teachers and to school administrators.

IMPLICATIONS DRAWN FROM SUPPLEMENTAL COMMENTS

Question 9 of the survey invited any additional comments that respondents wished to make. This section is a summary of implications drawn from the comments and from printed material submitted.

The comments in general indicate that "flexibility" is the greatest single value in recommended homework policy statements. The individualization of homework is the operational equivalent of "flexibility." It is, nevertheless, very appropriate to give a single assignment to an entire class. For example, if the teacher determines that the class needs practice in outlining, she is obligated to make provisions for teaching outlining and is justified in making a homework assignment related to outlining. However, if one or two or any number of people in that class need help or additional practice or drill in arithmetic or spelling she is encouraged to give that kind of an assignment to <u>those pupils who need it</u>. If <u>one</u> child in a class needs drill or strengthening in a particular topic or sub-topic of a subject, just that one child might be given homework.

No homework was recommended by the contributing school systems from grades 1 to 3. Limited amounts of homework can be given grades 4 to 6 with a gradually increasing amounts in grades 7 to 9 and more intensive amounts in grades 10 to 12. As far as the latter grades are concerned, a student in a general curriculum might not have as much homework assigned during the three year period as would one in a college preparatory curriculum. Anticipated college demands on the student, on the one hand, or lack of such academic demands, on the other, justify differentiation of home study loads.

One of the implications for Detroit as far as <u>written</u> policy is concerned, is that the comments submitted by large city stystems indicate that the availability of some kind of <u>written</u> statement is the pracice. The metropolitan area schools surrounding Detroit do not seem compelled to have this kind of a written statement. It doesn't seem that Detroit would necessarily be any more rigid than metropolitan area schools if it had a broadly stated policy which might become specific on certain points, such as number of hours of homework recommended and grades that should be involved in homework.

Regardless of the kind of homework policy a school system has it should be "periodically reviewed," which is in line with the basic philosophy that evaluation should be a continuing thing. As far as cooperative involvement is concerned in determining homework policy, the diversity and variety of offerings of a school system almost demands that a cooperative study and formulation of policy be evolved.